

## FIELD TRIPS OF THE CLUB

SUNDAY DECEMBER 13, TOMKINS COVE TO BEAR MOUNTAIN

A party of twelve members and guests made the field trip on Sunday, December 13, from Tomkins Cove to Bear Mountain, part of the time in heavy rain, but found many objects of botanical interest which made the weather of no consequence. Perhaps the most notable discovery was a large colony of the Purple Cliff Brake, *Pellaea atro-purpurea*, growing on a stone wall, on the path from Tomkins Cove station up to the state highway. The wall was built of blocks of granite and gneiss, and the fern did not grow on the blocks, but on the mortar joining them. The mortar, containing lime, supplied the calcium which is usually required by this species. Although it is said to grow on gneiss and trap rock, the writer has never seen it in this territory except on limestone in western New Jersey, the Wallkill Valley and the Harlem Valley in New York. It does not occur on the granites and gneisses in the Hudson Highlands. How it was established on the mortar of this wall, which is perhaps fifty years old, is an interesting speculation. Some such chance as established the colony of Walking Fern, *Camptosorus rhizophyllus* on a limestone boulder, transported by the glacial ice from the Wallkill Valley to the shore of Upper Cohasset Lake, in the Harriman State Park, possibly transportation of spores on the feet of birds, may have started the Purple Cliff Brake colony at Tomkins Cove. There are at least fifty plants on a length of 100 feet of wall, most of them on the inside, facing the east, but probably those on the outside have been plucked out by passersby.

Lichens, which were the particular objective of this trip, were numerous and in fine condition, plump and fresh looking by absorption of moisture from the rain. One of the most striking was the flesh pink *Baeomyces roseus*, of which colonies covering several square yards were seen, one of the largest being on the dump of the long abandoned Doodletown iron mine, another on a loamy bank beside the Seven Lakes Drive in Bear Mountain Park. This lichen, looking like a tiny pink mushroom, is a lovely thing.

Cladonias were numerous. The scarlet fruited *Cladonia cristatella*, in the forms *Beauvoisii*, with naked podetia; *vestita*,

with densely squamulose podetia, and *ramosa*, with extremely branched podetia, were common. These "British soldiers," so-called because their scarlet apothecia suggested the bright uniforms of the redcoats in the American Revolution, were to be seen along the route followed in October, 1777, by the British force which climbed over Dunderberg Mountain to storm Forts Clinton and Montgomery. The brown-fruited *C. mitrula* was occasional. The Reindeer Mosses, *Cladonia rangiferina* and *alpestris*, were numerous, also the somewhat similar *C. furcata*. Among the cup bearing Cladonias, *C. chlorophaea* and *C. pyxidata* were common and on the Doodletown mine dump was found a rarer form, *C. multiformis*, with greatly variegated smaller cups with fantastic proliferations. The horned forms, *C. bacillaris* and *macilenta*, were everywhere.

The Rock Tripes, *Umbilicaria pustulata* and *Gyrophora Dilenii*, were conspicuous on the higher ledges on West Mountain and the Timp. *Parmelia conspersa*, our most common lichen, was everywhere, also *P. saxatilis* and *P. tiliacea*, all on rocks; and *P. caperata*, on trees. The crustose rock lichens, especially *Lecidea albo-caerulescens*, *Biatorella clavus*, Rhizocarpons and Verrucarias were numerous; and in Doodletown Brook, the aquatic *Dermatocarpon miniatum aquaticum*.

RAYMOND H. TORREY

#### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

A dozen members of the Club and friends met at the Neperhan station of the Putnam Division in Yonkers to study twigs and the remains of fall flowers. The ground was still covered with snow from the preceding Friday, but the temperature was mild. Following Tuckahoe Road to the Yonkers Nursery, little was found but the common roadside weeds. One vine of *Rhus toxicodendron*, however, so completely clothes a dead tree that the vine itself appears to be a tree. Opposite the nursery is a fine stand of *Acer Negundo*, some of which were in fruit. In the growth under these trees one plant of *Lepidium virginicum* was found which still had white flowers at the top of the raceme. From this point our route followed the road to Grassy Sprain Reservoir, ascending a steep bank into the wood just south of the dam. On the top of this hill is a station for *Silene pennsylv-*

*vanica* but no trace of the plant could be found at this late date. This site also furnishes a splendid picnic place, overlooking the lake and valley, but the view this time was dull with haze. The wood extending north from here is rich in a variety of woodland plants, but little remained besides the woody things, mosses, and Christmas ferns. With the kind permission of the Boyce Thompson Institute we continued through their arboretum. Here three more plants were observed in bloom: in a low spot near the reservoir a low-growing form of *Bidens*; then following one of the paths through a little ravine, a few plants of *Lobelia inflata* still bearing half opened flowers at the top; and later *Hamamelis virginiana* on the bank above Sprain Road. This concluded the botanical part of the trip. The route is pleasant to follow at any time of year, and in late November it was interesting to see how much of the fall flora could be recognized in the dry and withered state. The unusually late blooming of the four species mentioned was a real surprise.

HAROLD H. CLUM